

Office of Minority Health Establishes Health Role

The Office of Minority Health (OMH) at the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) began working in September 2005 with a 23-member Advisory Committee to provide input and to guide a strategic planning process. Sharon L. Goolsby, RN is the Program Manager. The committee recently completed the first phase of the office development and has been invaluable in helping define the mission of this office.

The mission of the office is “to promote and improve the health status of racial, ethnic and tribal populations in Kansas by advocating for and coordinating access to primary and preventive health services that are effective, efficient, culturally and linguistically appropriate.”

OMH has been charged with a leadership role in the mobilization of available health resources, programs and initiatives that equitably serve racial/ethnic and tribal populations statewide.

Many partnerships and collaborations are being developed with the OMH which are community based, faith-based, state and federal. All activities have been supported through donations and grants.

Highlighted activities of the office to date have been:

- Collaboration with the Urban League of the Mid Plains to host a MLK community wide breakfast in Wichita with Dr. David Williams, University of Michigan, noted health disparities researcher, as keynote speaker.
- Legislative awareness session on the impact of health disparities among racial/ethnic and tribal populations with Dr. Williams as the guest presenter.
- Annual Health Disparities Conference, “Healthy Cultures, Healthy Kansas”
- Approval of Infrastructure Development funding from National OMH (3 yrs, 75K)

Upcoming Activities:

- KDHE Organizational Needs Assessment of Cultural Competency within current programs and service delivery.
- Summit on the State of Diabetes in Kansas Among Racial/Ethnic and Tribal populations.
- Phase II of Strategic Planning process.
- Focus Groups and Roundtables as a data collection method to assess health care information and resource preferences of racial/ethnic communities.

For more information on the Office of Minority Health, you may contact Sharon Goolsby, RN, Program Manager, 785-296-5577, sgoolsby@kdhe.state.ks.us or www.minorityhealthks.org.